

F A C U L T Y O F M U S I C
U N I V E R S I T Y O F T O R O N T O

Beethoven Sonata Series

Three Sunday afternoon concerts devoted to
THE COMPLETE SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

Lorand Fenyves, *violin*

Patricia Parr, *piano*

Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building

April 14, 21 and 28, 1985

3:00 p.m.

PROGRAMME I - SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 1985

Sonata No. 1 in D Major (Op. 12, No. 1)

Allegro con brio
Tema con Variazioni
Rondo

Sonata No. 10 in G Major (Op. 96)

Allegro moderato
Adagio espressivo
Scherzo
Poco Allegretto

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 7 in C minor (Op. 30, No. 2)

Allegro con brio
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo
Finale

PROGRAMME II - SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1985

Sonata No. 2 in A Major (Op. 12, No. 2)

Allegro vivace
Andante, più tosto Allegretto
Allegro piacevole

Sonata No. 5 in F Major (Op. 24) "Spring"

Allegro
Adagio molto espressivo
Scherzo
Rondo

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 4 in A minor (Op. 23)

Presto

Andante scherzoso, più Allegretto

Allegro molto

Sonata No. 8 in G Major (Op. 30, No. 3)

Allegro assai

Tempo di Minuetto

Allegro vivace

PROGRAMME III - SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 1985

Sonata No. 6 in A Major (Op. 30, No. 1)

Allegro

Adagio

Allegretto con Variazioni

Sonata No. 3 in E^b Major (Op. 12, No. 3)

Allegro con spirito

Adagio con molt'espressione

Rondo

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 9 in A Major (Op. 47) "Kreutzer"

Adagio sostenuto - Presto

Andante con Variazioni

Finale

These concerts are being recorded for future broadcast on CJRT-FM

LORAND FENYVES, Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, started his concert career in his native Budapest and on the eve of World War II moved to Israel where he founded the Israeli String Quartet and was co-founder of the Israeli Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. For many years he was concertmaster of l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and, in addition, conducted master classes of international renown before coming to Canada in 1965, where he has been associated with the Jeunesses Musicales and the National Youth Orchestra. Recent concert tours have taken him to Europe and Japan where he appears regularly with orchestras and in solo recitals.

PATRICIA PARR performed with the Toronto Symphony, the Rochester Civic Orchestra and the New York Pops Orchestra before she was 10. A double scholarship student at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, Miss Parr followed her studies there with two years of study with Rudolf Serkin. Since then she has performed in concert, on radio, television and with major orchestras throughout Canada and the United States. Her outstanding ability as a chamber music artist has become widely known with numerous appearances at the Marlboro Festival and with several international ensembles. As a Professor at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, she performs frequently with many of her colleagues.

Beethoven Sonata Series

The ten sonatas that Beethoven wrote for violin and piano are concentrated in the early part of his career. In terms of the piano sonatas most of these duos fall between the Pathétique and the Waldstein, or if you prefer, only the last violin sonata postdates the Eroica symphony. We cannot expect to observe the same stylistic evolution that we find in the string quartets, the piano sonatas and the symphonies, and yet evolution is most definitely there; indeed we have already taken a giant step when we begin the series with Op. 12, No. 1 for there can be no question that we are dealing here with equal partners or at least partners equal in terms of the instruments of the late eighteenth century. In 1798 this was a relatively recent development. The violin and keyboard sonata had been an important genre at the beginning of the century but by the early classical period it had been eclipsed and the string part had degenerated to mere accompaniment. Haydn was not even attracted to the medium and the evolution of an independent violin part is to be found much more in the series of sonatas by Mozart. This was Beethoven's starting point.

Three sonatas Op. 12, Nos. 1, 2, 3

The three sonatas of Op. 12 were dedicated to Salieri, Beethoven's teacher of vocal and dramatic composition, who has acquired recent notoriety through the film "Amadeus". Beethoven's relationship with Salieri, as with all his teachers, seems to have been stormy, swinging from warm regard to downright hostility and it is not recorded what the older composer thought of these works. One critic, however, complained that they were "learned, learned, always learned", and that they contained "no naturalness, no melody". To our ears these are curious criticisms that focus attention on the novelty of these works and, especially in the first movements, the profusion of material that Beethoven throws at the listener. The opening of the D Major sonata is notable for the singular manner in which ideas tumble over each other. All of these sonatas have three movements and each ends with a rondo, the first and third sonatas with rather typical rondo themes, the second with a more unusual, easy-going theme. As a slow movement the D major sonata has a set of variations that sound anything but learned, but the most individual movement is the C minor Adagio of the third sonata. With its bold investigation of new textures and its emotional intensity it looks forward to many of the composer's later works.

Two sonatas Op. 23 and Op. 24 (Spring)

Beethoven's next essays in the genre were the two sonatas dedicated to Count Moritz von Fries and published in 1801, the same year as the First Symphony and the Op. 18 String Quartets. Although the works were issued with different opus numbers it is clear from Beethoven's sketchbook that they were conceived together demonstrating the composer's common practice of working simultaneously on two contrasted works in the same genre. The dedicatee, one of the large band of Viennese aristocracy that lionized the young composer, found himself the following year embroiled in one of Beethoven's constant battles with his publishers, Artaria and Mollo. When the battle dragged on and finally reached the court of the Magistrate of Vienna the Count wisely found the need to be travelling elsewhere.

Critical opinion of the A minor sonata (Op. 23) has been mixed. Walter Riezler felt it should have pride of place among the first five sonatas while for Marion Scott it was not so good a work as the following F Major sonata. What is not in question is the formidable power contained in the outside movements -- a relentless drive that gives us a foretaste of the Kreutzer sonata. There is now no room

for the myriad contrasts of the early sonatas but rather a single-mindedness of theme and a sparseness in the textures. These qualities are, hardly relieved by the middle movement, not a true slow movement but an andante scherzoso, with its curiously halting opening theme and fugato continuation.

The nickname "Spring" attached to the Op. 24 sonata does not originate with Beethoven but it characterises the lyrical opening well enough. This relaxed theme contrasts with the rhythmically vigorous second subject (a reversal of text-book procedures) and takes almost no part in the relatively brief development section. The "Spring" sonata is the first of the violin sonatas to have four movements, the deeply expressive Adagio being followed by a very brief scherzo. A number of writers have commented on the Mozartian character of the rondo theme of the last movement, a style that Beethoven chooses in order to balance the intensity of the slow movement.

Three sonatas Op. 30 Nos. 1, 2, 3

The next three sonatas form a group which Beethoven published together in 1802 as Op. 30. Maynard Solomon finds particular significance in the dedications attached to a number of works from this period noting that many are disinterested (that is unpaid!); that is the case with the dedication of these sonatas to the young Czar Alexander. For Solomon these works signal Beethoven arriving at the outer limit of the high-Classic style and it is undoubtedly the central minor-key work that supports this idea most clearly. This, for Riezler, is heroic pathos on the grand scale while Marion Scott senses a "poetic idea" behind the work. The opening movement has an expansiveness that is to be a common feature of many of the middle period works and like the first Rasumovsky quartet does not repeat the exposition but reinterprets the opening in a wonderfully original way. The power of this movement requires a grand closing movement and Beethoven provides a passionate sonata rondo built on a theme of "daring, almost banal simplicity". The middle movements caused Beethoven some soul-searching and at one stage he wanted to remove the scherzo. The other two sonatas of the group are lighter in character. No. 3 is for Nigel Fortune one of the composer's wittiest and most delightful works with touches of Haydn in the perpetuum mobile finale. What is now the finale of the "Kreutzer" sonata was intended originally by the composer to close the A Major work of this Op. 30 group. Perhaps finding it too brilliant for this sonata he substituted the present, more gentle set of variations.

Sonata in A Major (Kreutzer) Op. 47

The best-known of the violin sonatas is probably the Kreutzer sonata, a work written rather hastily at the same time as the Eroica symphony. The unique qualities of the work are advertised by the composer on the title page when he says that the sonata is written "in a very concertante style, like that of a concerto". Tolstoy found the work disturbing; the hero of his novel of the same name says that "such works should be played only in grave, significant conditions, and only then when certain deeds corresponding to such music are to be accomplished". Although the sonata was dedicated to Rodolphe Kreutzer the first performance was given by the Afro-German violinist George Bridgetower who was forced almost to sight-read two of the movements but who had enough aplomb to improvise a brief cadenza in imitation of the piano at the beginning of the Presto. The second movement is a set of variations and the finale is a tarantella with such an infectious theme that it is as well that it is the last music heard in this concert series.

Sonata in G Major, Op. 96

Following the Kreutzer sonata Beethoven did not touch the genre for a number of years and then only for one more work, the G Major sonata Op. 96. This last and finest of the violin sonatas, a true companion piece to the Archduke Trio, owes some of its qualities to the French violinist Pierre Rode for whom Beethoven completed the work in 1812. "I have not hurried unduly to compose the last movement merely for the sake of being punctual," wrote Beethoven, "the more so as in view of Rode's playing I have had to give more thought to the composition of this movement. In our Finales we like to have fairly noisy passages, but Rode does not care for them -- and so I have been hampered." Serenity, simplicity, elegance, these are the words we associate with the opening of the work which as Marion Scott aptly suggests "must sound as if the music had been flowing from eternity and had just emerged into hearing". The tonal excursions in this sonata are more adventurous than any to be found in the earlier works and this is emphasised by the choice of E^b for the marvellously expressive Adagio, and for the trio of the following scherzo. The last movement is a set of variations on a simple, song-like theme.

The Faculty of Music cordially invites you to attend other events in the Edward Johnson Building. Throughout the year there are many recitals by Faculty members and students as well as orchestral, band, choral, jazz and opera performances. Information is available in the Calendar of Events, which may be picked up in the Main Lobby near the Box Office. For information telephone 978-3744 or 978-3751.

Contributions for the scholarship or operating funds (payable to the University of Toronto and directed to the Faculty of Music) are most welcome, and are eligible for an income tax receipt. Please address donations or enquiries to Professor Carl Morey, Dean, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1. Telephone 978-3761.

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The Faculty of Music acknowledges with gratitude the generosity of Henry Galler Incorporated in providing the Faculty with new Hitachi video-recording equipment.

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Lorand Fenyves and Patricia Parr have recorded Franck's Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano, and Bartok's Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, for Arbor Discs, the University of Toronto's new record label. The record is available in record shops or from the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, M5S 1A1.